

# STAFF RECOMMENDATION

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NCPC File No. 6132



## PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE IN FRONT OF THE WHITE HOUSE SECURITY AND LANDSCAPE IMPROVEMENTS FINAL PAVING MATERIALS

Pennsylvania Avenue between 15th and 17th Streets, NW, and  
Jackson and Madison Places, NW,  
Washington, DC

Submission by the Federal Highway Administration

December 30, 2003

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### *Abstract*

On September 04, 2003 the National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC) approved the final site and building plans for Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House, which called for landscape and security improvements to this important place. The final approval excepted out the third granite selection and the asphalt paving materials. On December 04, 2003, NCPC approved the third and final granite material for the avenue. The Federal Highway Administration has submitted the natural-toned asphalt paving for the avenue in front of the White House and Jackson and Madison Places, and the asphalt paver blocks to be used in the expanded sidewalk area on Jackson and Madison Places.

### *Commission Action Requested by Applicant*

Approval of the natural-toned asphalt pavement and asphalt paver blocks for the landscape and security project on Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House and Jackson and Madison Places pursuant to 40 U.S.C. §8722(d) and Section 5 of the National Capital Planning Act (40 U.S.C. §8722(b)(1)).

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### *Executive Director's Recommendation*

The Commission:

**Approve** the natural-toned asphalt pavement and asphalt paver blocks for the security and landscape project on Pennsylvania Avenue at the White House (between 15th and 17th Streets, NW, including Jackson and Madison Places), Washington DC, as shown on NCPC Map File No. 1.31(44.70)41250.

### **EVALUATION**

The asphalt paving materials will accommodate pedestrians, skaters, bikers, and horses, as well as withstand the loading requirements of delivery vehicles, emergency equipment, motorcades and inaugural parade elements. Additionally, the material will not preclude the future reopening of the street to vehicular traffic, or the future construction of a tunnel under Pennsylvania Avenue.

The appearance of the asphalt paving materials will be perceptually softer and more natural, and will therefore spatially connect the White House with Lafayette Park, strengthening its historical relationship to President's Park. This material will create the desired character of this space, encouraging pedestrians to slow down, stroll, and reflect on the significance of the place.

These paving materials will also reinforce the overall design intention to mediate between the European formality of the L'Enfant Plan, the naturalism of Downing's Lafayette Park and the open setting of the White House grounds.

### **PREVIOUS COMMISSION ACTION and RESPONSE TO PREVIOUS COMMISSION ACTION**

On September 4, 2003, the Commission approved the final site and building plans submitted by the Federal Highway Administration for the security and landscape project for Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House, and Jackson and Madison Places, except for the granite type proposed for the gutter along the southern curb line of Pennsylvania Avenue, the aggregate color mix and binder for the asphalt pavement, and the pavement type to be used in the expanded sidewalks on Jackson and Madison Places. The Commission approved the final granite material at its December 4, 2003 meeting.

*While refining the aggregate color and size to produce the right color mix and visual quality, the FHWA continued to evaluate different pavement designs and has concluded that the proposed natural-toned asphalt pavement is the most appropriate to achieve the desired character. The aggregate mix has been selected for its color value (the degree of the lightness or darkness of color) to complement the granite panels and for its greater saturation of reds and browns to complement the brick material on the site.*

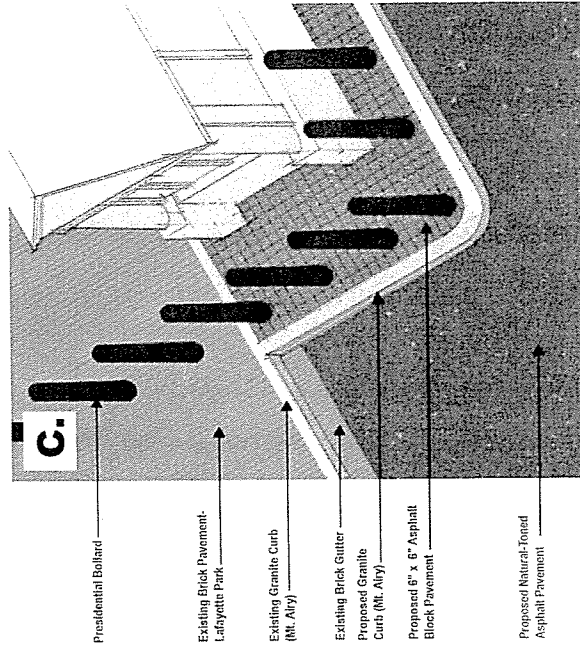
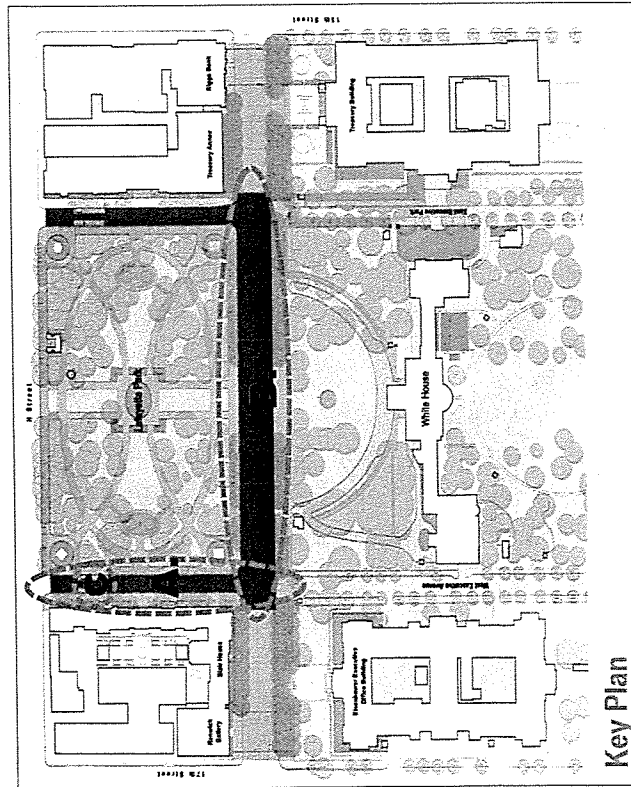
*FHWA has proposed 6-inch square asphalt paver blocks as the material to be used on the expanded sidewalks on Jackson and Madison Places. The paver will complement the roadway paving, the brick sidewalks and the warm colors of the townhouses on Jackson and Madison Places. The existing granite curb will remain and a new granite curb will be installed to form the expanded sidewalks.*

# Pennsylvania Avenue

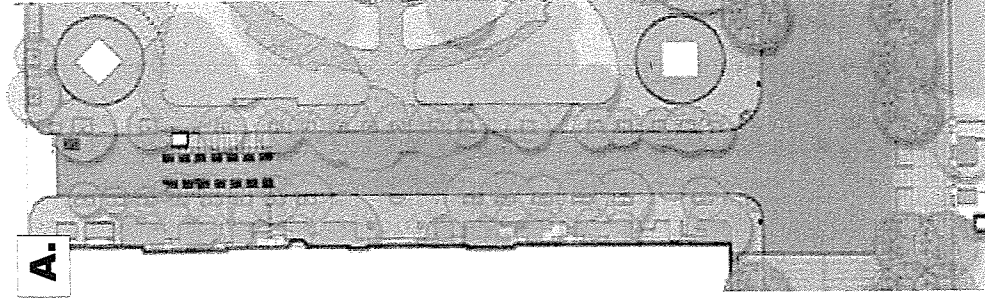
## *In front of the White House*

### *Asphalt Paving Locations*

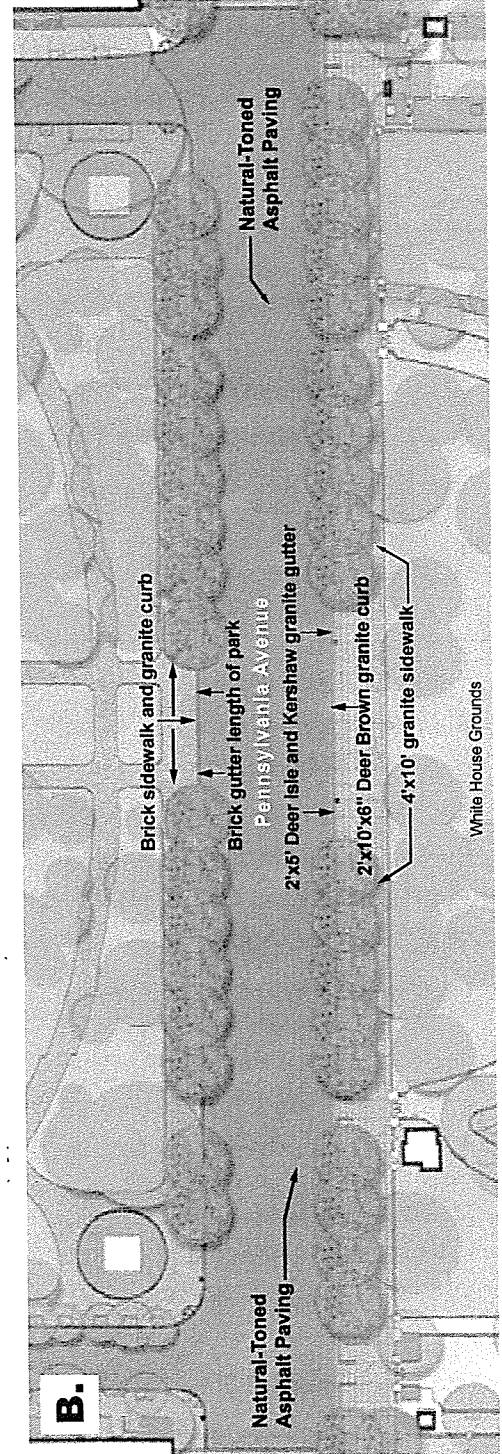
#### Attachment I



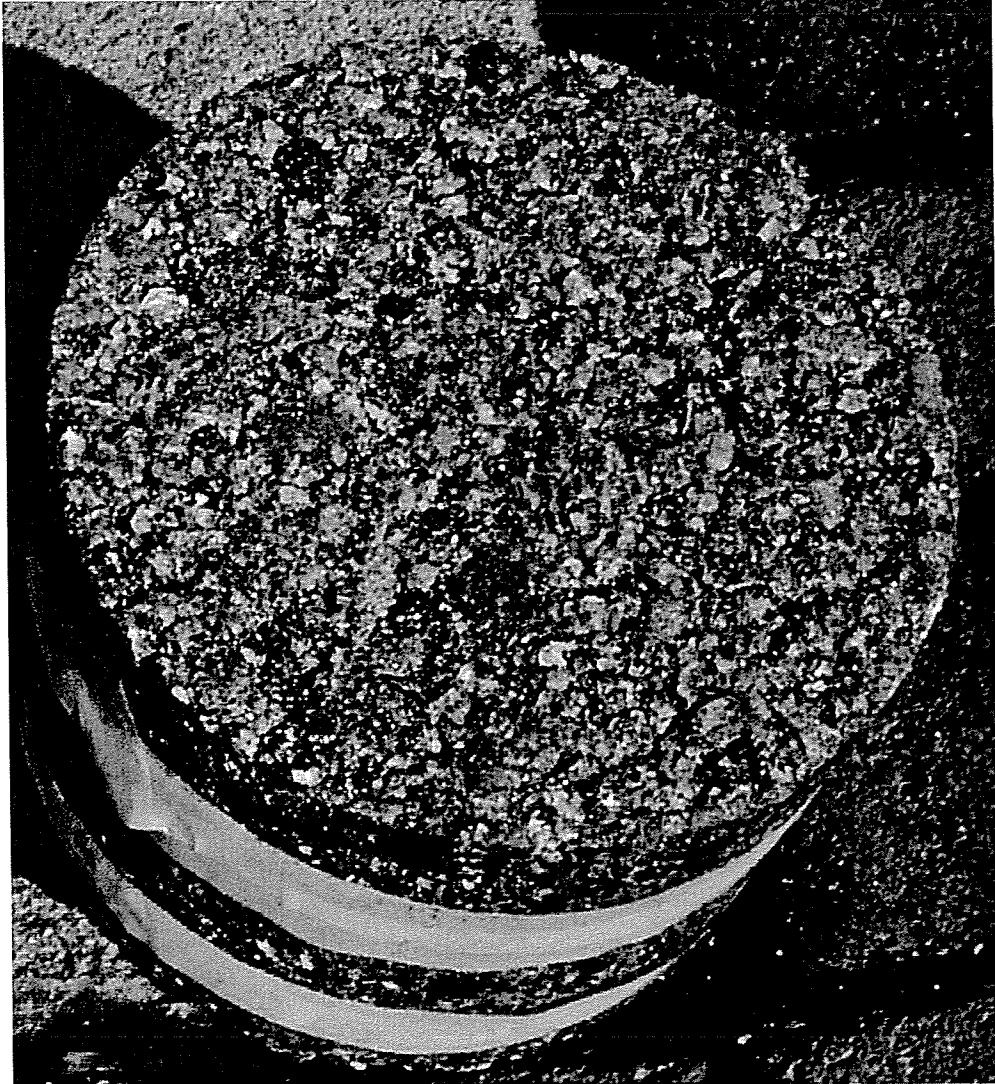
Jackson and Madison Places (Typical Detail Plan)



Jackson and Madison Places (Typical Paving Plan)



Pennsylvania Avenue between Jackson and Madison Places (Paving Plan)



Natural-Toned Asphalt Pavement Sample